

NAVAL MILITIAS

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army  
Command and General Staff College in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

by

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## ABSTRACT

NAVAL MILITIAS by LCDR John H. Booth, USNR, 79 pages.

This historical study chronicles the rise and fall of the Naval Militia in the United States. It traces the successes and failures of the Naval Militia throughout its evolution from the Revolutionary War until today.

Beginning with the development of State Navies during the Revolutionary War, the study examines the important role that naval militias played, and why they declined over the years due to their high costs, the antipathy that professional naval officers expressed toward them, and the changing nature of naval warfare. The study looks at the role of the Volunteer Navy during the Civil War, and the events afterwards that lead to the movement to develop an organized Naval Militia in various states. The study examines and analyzes the legislative developments that lead to the formation of a federal Naval Reserve, and how the formation of such a reserve eclipsed the Naval Militia in importance.

The study ends with comments and prospects for the use of naval militias in the future concluding, that the Naval Militia may still have some utilitarian value.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### Introduction

The history of the military forces charged with defending the United States has been examined extensively. Numerous monographs, articles, dissertations, and theses have been produced outlining the histories of the various military organizations and their significant contributions. Remarkably, one organization has been absent from these historical studies--the Naval Militia. The Naval Militia, essentially the foundation of today's Naval Reserve Force, has not been given the exhaustive examination that it deserves. The purpose of this thesis to examine the historical beginnings of the Naval Militia, its rise to prominence in the late nineteenth century and its decline after World War I. Equally important, this thesis will examine the status of the Naval Militia and the role it currently plays in defense policy and what role it could play in the future. Throughout the history of the Naval Militia is woven a common thread of neglect, internecine bickering, and high costs associated with running a navy. These reasons will be explored as the causes for the Naval Militia's near disappearance after the Revolutionary War, its resurgence in the late nineteenth century, and its ultimate decline. It is hoped that this thesis will shed light on this little examined area in United States military and naval history and offer some insights on how it might be used or resurrected.

To begin, this thesis will examine the early beginnings of the Naval Militia and State Navies during the Revolutionary War. With broad strokes it will explain how and why these organizations were formed, outline some of the expeditions they took part in, and highlight their successes and failures.

A review of contemporary political thought on the nature of military service and organizations will show how the Naval Militias of the Confederacy were used to form the bulk of the Confederate States Navy.

The period from the Civil War up to World War I was the hightide of the naval militia movement. It is during this tumultuous period that the movement for forming naval militias came to fruition. Numerous legislative acts that lead to formation of naval militias in Massachusetts, New York, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Illinois, and California. Equally important, was the role contemporary naval thought on the subject of forming a Naval Militia and a Naval Reserve. Why did the Navy Department favor the formation of state naval militias over a federal naval reserve? The makeup of the naval militias during this period and the reasons, how and why, they were formed also provide insight into their history. Organizational relationships to the Navy department, the federal government, and the state legislatures and governors that authorized them, controlled them, and supported them financially are important in understanding their development and provide information on who belonged to these naval militias and what skills did they or did they not bring to their respective state naval militia. The experience of the United States against that of Canada and Great Britain

to provide a comparative basis for similarities and differences in naval militia and naval reserve movements in those countries. Were these movements based on Mahan's universal principles of sea power or were they uniquely American in character?

The role of the Naval Militia during and after World War I is equally important during this interesting period. It is during this period that the Naval Militia began its decline. This decline and the rise of the Naval and Marine Corps Reserve really tells why the Naval Militia failed. Just as important, as the Naval Reserve gained influence the formation of the Coast Guard, Coast Guard Reserve, and Coast Guard Auxiliary eclipsed the Naval Militia in importance during this period. Technology and the changing nature of the United States military also explains the decline of the Naval Militia. Currently, only four states have active naval militias; they may offer some modest suggestions for what role the Naval Militia may play in the future.

## CHAPTER 2

### EARLY HISTORY

#### Revolutionary War

The militia has been the foundation for this country's defense since its founding. ARTICLE I of the U.S. Constitution, clearly called for the establishment of militias in the various states.<sup>1</sup> Volumes have been written concerning the establishment of militias and the anathema of large standing armies to the early leaders of this country.<sup>2</sup> While the experiences of men such as George Washington and Alexander Hamilton may have colored their perception as to the uses and the inherent problems of using these citizen soldiers and sailors, the vast majority of the population was still leery of the inherent and catastrophic potential of supporting a large standing army and navy.

During the Revolutionary War, many of the states supported their own navies. Dr. Harold Wiegand, the foremost historian of the Naval Reserve, argues that they "accomplished very little."<sup>3</sup> The fact remains that they did contribute significantly in the early days of the Revolution and were used extensively in combat alongside the ships of the Continental Navy. When the Revolutionary War broke out, the northern states used their extensive maritime experience to quickly establish naval militia units to counteract the British and Tory menace. Many of these vessels were converted merchantman and many were nothing

more than privateers sailing under "letter of marque" issued by state governments.

Massachusetts was one of the first states to build ships for its Naval Militia, having the resources, funding, and knowledge to do so. Three days after the battles of Lexington and Concord, the Provincial Congress authorized the construction of six armed vessels and by July of 1776 three additional vessels were ready: the sloop *Tyrannicide*, and the brigatines *Rising Empire* and *Independence*.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, the state assembly established naval offices in fifteen seacoast towns. The state not only set rules for operating the Naval Militia, but also set its operational policy. The rules and regulations adopted by the state for its armed vessels were based on those of the Continental Navy. During periods of the British blockade of its ports, the Massachusetts Naval Militia was free to roam as far as France and during winter months campaigned in the Caribbean.<sup>5</sup> By the end of the Revolutionary War, Massachusetts had the largest naval militia of all the states. But, more importantly, it was the most successful in terms of number of vessels captures.

Other New England colonies also had naval militias, but none as extensive or successful as that of Massachusetts. Connecticut also manned a naval militia that was used to "prevent trafficking between Tories in the state and British held Long Island."<sup>6</sup> In July of 1775, the Connecticut General Assembly voted to arm two vessels. The first of these vessels was the brig *Minerva* and the schooner *Spy*. Both of these vessels operated out of New London.<sup>7</sup> Throughout the war the government of Connecticut raised funds for additional vessels for its Naval

Militia in its effort to stop trade between the state and British Tories. Rhode Island was the first state to take action and arm vessels for a Naval Militia. The Rhode Island Naval Militia operated a number of smaller vessels in Narragansett Bay to protect mercantile interests on that waterway. In fact the Rhode Island Naval Militia made the first authorized capture of a British vessel in the Revolutionary War when the sloops *Katy* and *Washington* under Andrew Whipple captured the British tender *Rose* outside of Newport.<sup>8</sup> New Hampshire, because of its geography, supported only one vessel in its Naval Militia.<sup>9</sup>

The Middle Atlantic states, while boasting the second largest Naval Militia in Pennsylvania, did not offer as deep or systemic support as the New England States. The second largest naval militia during the Revolutionary War belonged to Pennsylvania. The ships of this naval militia were fewer and smaller than the Massachusetts Naval Militia. Initially, the state constructed thirteen row galleys at a cost of £550 each.<sup>10</sup> The Pennsylvania Naval Militia's major objective was to defend the Delaware River and the port of Philadelphia. Because these row galleys lacked sufficient firepower to stand up to British warships, additional vessels were authorized. New York's Naval Militia was relatively small for the size of the state and the amount of transoceanic commerce that flowed through New York City. In fact, it at first supported only two galleys. New Jersey, in part to its Tory sympathies, did not even have a State Navy during the Revolutionary War, although it did support a small number of privateers.

Many of the southern states also had naval militias. The southern states of Maryland and Virginia established militias to

protect their interests within Chesapeake Bay. Maryland's Committee of Safety authorized the purchase of the ship *Defence* in February 1777 to protect local shipping.<sup>11</sup> Later that year an additional six galleys were put into service. Virginia's State Navy was authorized in December of 1775. Although relatively small, this naval militia was tasked with protecting the rivers leading from the Chesapeake Bay. The brigs *Liberty* and *Adventure* and the schooner *Patriot* were the first vessels purchased by the Virginia Committee of Safety for its Naval Militia.<sup>12</sup> By July of 1775, South Carolina had established and operated a small navy of brigs and sloops. The first naval vessel commissioned in the state was the brig *Defence*.<sup>13</sup> By the end of the war, the state was able to purchase a frigate for its Navy in Holland. The frigate, renamed the *South Carolina*, sailed from Holland in 1780, refitted in Havana, and in January 1782, led a Spanish expedition to the Bahamas. Georgia also supported a Naval Militia of a few galleys to protect its shipping interests in Savannah harbor which it started in July of 1775.<sup>14</sup> Interestingly, the Georgia Naval Militia was funded by the Continental Congress which provided the state with funds for four galleys--the only state to have its total naval costs assumed by the federal government. North Carolina also supported a very small Naval Militia to protect its outer banks.

Like the Continental Navy, the naval militia of the various states were overwhelmed by their British enemy. The British Navy held complete superiority over the Continental Navy and the State Navies. Like their federal counterparts, the war records of the naval militias

were indifferent. By the end of the Revolutionary War, most of the naval militias existed on paper only.

The Massachusetts Naval Militia was nearly destroyed in the disastrous Penobscot expedition in August 1779. During this one engagement alone, most of Massachusetts' armed vessels were captured or destroyed.<sup>15</sup> By 1783, all Massachusetts vessels had either been captured or sold. The story was much the same for the other state naval militias. Pennsylvania's Naval Militia was forced to flee up the Delaware River in September of 1777, when Lord Howe captured Philadelphia. As result of the overpowering presence of the British fleet, a number of vessels belonging to the Continental Navy and the Pennsylvania Naval Militia were burned to the waterline by their own crew to avoid capture. Most disturbing about this episode was the actions of some of the Naval Militia men. J. A. McManemin noted that several months later a number of officers and men were convicted of desertion in the face of the enemy and shot.<sup>16</sup> Up and down the Atlantic seacoast, the story of the Naval Militias were the same. Facing the largest and best navy in the world, they were no match for the professional "Jack Tars" of the British fleet in massed engagements. However, in limited engagements close to shore or away from the British fleet and against British merchantmen or lightly armed vessels, they were every much their equal.

Numerous successes can be recounted by the vessels of the State Navies. Maryland's Naval Militia even had success in amphibious operations being used successfully to capture a number of Tory held islands in the Chesapeake Bay. Elsewhere the story was the same. The



armed vessels of the Naval Militia were used successfully to escort local shipping and to prey upon unsuspecting merchant vessels. They were, in modern terms, a successful force multiplier used in an economy of force operation. The most amazing fact about the formation of naval militias during this period was the farsightedness of the revolutionary assemblies and Committees of Safety that organized them in seeing the importance of sea power. These legislatures knew that each of their states depended on the sea for commerce. It was in their best interest to provide protection of their own merchantmen. Throughout the history of the Naval Militia, it will be found that states, though often times begrudgingly, accepted that only military forces under state control would look out for state commercial interests. The Continental Congress made this abundantly clear when it urged all states to field their own naval forces.

The problem inherent in establishing naval militias was their prohibitive costs. Only the larger states could afford to buy or build and operate ships of reasonable size to make them useful. By the end of the Revolutionary War, the costs of operating State Navies became too much of a drain on state coffers, and expenses sank more vessels than the British. Georgia, for example, never had the funds to begin to establish a Naval Militia and needed financial assistance from the Continental Congress. Many of the states by 1781, had sold their vessels because they no longer had funds to repair or operate them. Massachusetts' legislature was so poor that revenues from the sale of their ships were used to pay war debts.<sup>17</sup> The hulls of the vessels of Maryland's Naval Militia were in so poor condition the ships could not

put to sea.<sup>18</sup> As for costs associated with maintaining ships, it was reported that the annual cost for upkeep of one frigate exceed \$113,000, and the purchase price of a new brig was over \$32,000.<sup>19</sup> Here again, another theme begins to run throughout the history of the Naval Militia. Acquiring and operating navies is too expensive for even the largest of states. The navies that state assemblies could afford did not provide adequate protection and moreover were a drain on limited state finances. Only the resources of a strong central government, with the will to use them, could provide for a navy strong enough to defend the coastline.

Therefore, naval militias were not only defeated on the high seas by the greatest navy in the world at that time, but also defeated in the state houses of the colonies due in large part to the high costs associated with maintaining them. The costs involved with acquiring and maintaining armed naval vessels and the incessant bickering within the state assemblies over the financing of naval militias lead to them being overshadowed by their larger and somewhat better financed counterpart, the Continental Navy. Nonetheless, the naval militias did help in the overall victory of America over the British. Vessels from the State Navies were able to capture a great amount of British Merchantmen and provided important protection to American shipping.

## CHAPTER 3

### FEDERALISTS AND NAVAL MILITIAS

#### Militias

By the end of the American Revolution, Naval Militias and State Navies were no longer in widespread use. The pecuniary plights of the state treasuries made support of naval militias for the most part impractical. Moreover, these early fiscal conservatives saw no need for such expensive forces as State Navies. Equally important in the decline of the naval militias, after the defeat of the British at Yorktown, was the changing nature of the new nation's military. The United States, in its formative years following the Revolution, was a unique nation born from a revolutionary zeal. As it tried to create new institutions, the nature of its future military both land- and sea-based needed to be defined. The nature of these new forces was based as much on political philosophy as on perceived threats and as such shaped naval militias of this period.

How the United States was going to develop its military forces in the years following the revolution was subject to intense political debate. During this period, the United States Navy developed away from the militia system. In a large part, the Revolutionary War was fought with the notion that large standing armies were inherently unjust and were a danger to the republic. Clearly many of the founding fathers ideologically were predisposed to support a force made up of

citizen-soldiers and sailors. The idea of the farmer and craftsman, or in the case of naval militias the merchant seaman, taking up arms to protect the republic was an idealistic goal of the early federalists. This lofty goal was not only based on past experiences that many in the new nation had with excesses of the professional Royal Army that had occupied the colonies and whose oppressive nature was earlier vilified, but, also on the notion that such institutions were inherently dangerous to a republic. A professional army under the command of an ambitious man could just as easily lead to the downfall of the new nation as equally as the intrigue and aggressiveness of a foreign power. Additionally, many of the experiences of the founding fathers had with the Continental Army and Navy had been troubling. Corruption, while not rampant, did exist in the Continental Army and Navy. This corruption in large standing forces, many felt, could be systemic and dim any prospect that the new nation had of developing truly moral and republican institutions.

Nonetheless, a dichotomy existed that fueled the debate over the nature of the new republic's new military forces. While almost all the early federalists theorists believed strongly in the virtues of a military composed of citizen-soldiers and -sailors, they were also aware of the poor record such forces had amassed during the recent conflict. Militias, to be blunt, performed poorly militarily during the war, and citizens that comprised them were not always to be counted upon. How then to balance the quite important military needs of the nation against those somewhat esoteric and moral principles that the new republic engendered became a problem that required an answer. The answers to

such a problem were embodied in the shape and development of militias in the years following the Revolution and the period leading up to the Civil War.

Lawrence Cress in his work Citizen in Arms develops in much detail the debates and ideology of the important military and political leaders working on this issue in the early days of the new republic. Cress argues pervasively that the political and military leaders in the years following the American Revolution believed the "militia must remain the principle instrument of national defense."<sup>1</sup> Cress goes on to provide a detailed account of the political debate that shaped the military strategy in the early years of the republic. By all accounts, the debates were heated, and even though the poor war records of the militias were highlighted, the fear of large standing armies and a professional military class that could come under the sway of a unscrupulous and corrupt leader were considered the more persuasive of the arguments. By 1789, despite misgivings based on his own personal experiences with militias, George Washington recognized and accepted the need for a military and navy based on the militia system.<sup>2</sup> The Militia Act of 1792 reflected these concerns and though many Federalists, Washington included, would have liked to have seen more centralized control of the military, recognized that congress would not provide for such an undertaking. While the Militia Act of 1792 provided a groundwork for the land militias, it neglected the role of a navy. The successful establishment of the Navy Department by John Adams in the first years of his presidency helped to create the underpinnings of a strong federal Navy.

Clearly, the tone had been set at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The United States was on its way to a military system that would be dominated by state militias. However, while the land forces were to be militia-based (on reasons already extrapolated) the rise of a strong naval militias waned during this same period. Perhaps the greatest proponent of naval militias was Thomas Jefferson. Jefferson was a strong opponent of large standing armies and navies. Furthermore, he was a fiscal conservative and would not see the small funds of the treasury wasted. While it is clear Jefferson saw large standing forces as an anathema to the republic, he also recognized that a strong naval force would be necessary to ensure the continued survival of the new republic. Thus, Jefferson was an early and staunch proponent of the Naval Militia. Though having never served in a militia, he and other Jeffersonians believed the problems that critics subscribed to the militias could be overcome and that they were in theory superior to large standing forces common to the monarchist European models. The model for the Jeffersonian military was simple. "Jefferson kept the army small, drydocked the navy and secured the authority to build 263 gunboats which, manned by naval militia, were to protect the coasts."<sup>3</sup> While this model described above would have suited Jefferson and his supporters just fine, events overcame them and they were forced to accept a larger and more expensive naval force. When in 1807 the British frigate HMS *Leopard* attacked and detained seamen from the USS *Chesapeake*, Jefferson's hopes for a small naval force ended. To ensure the neutrality of American shipping, he was forced to abandon his plan

for the use of gunboats and accept a larger naval presence. As such, he proposed legislation for establishing a naval militia:

Be it enacted, etc., that every free, able bodied white male citizen of the United States of the age of 18 years and under the age of 45 whose principle occupation is on the high sea, or on the tidewater of the United States shall be exempt from the service of the land militia....The persons so to constitute the said naval militia shall be enrolled in the several ports, harbors, and towns thereto adjacent to which they belong....and shall be formed into companies, each to be commanded by a Lieutenant Commandant and a Second Lieutenant, to be appointed by the authority of the state to which such company belongs.<sup>4</sup>

The essence of this bill was introduced into congress by Albert Gallatin.<sup>5</sup> Congress, however, refused to appropriate sufficient funds, and Jefferson's plans for a useful Naval Militia wilted. The Regular Navy under centralized federal control assumed responsibility for the national defense of America's coasts and sea lines of communication, while on land the state militias continued to provide the bulk of the fighting force as the federal army wilted.

Why, then, did naval militias follow a different path from the land forces of the state militias that composed the bulk of the American armed forces during this period? The literature to date offers no explanation to this most intriguing question and has unfortunately glossed over it. Most of the scholarship indicates that the Naval Militia declined because of a lack of funds. The country in this period faced an astonishing \$82,000,000 debt.<sup>6</sup> Though funds were available, they were spent to improve the regular Navy. This is partially evidenced by the fact that the regular Navy grew during this period and emerged from the War 1812 as formidable power, although not nearly as powerful as its British foes. The basis for the decision to

support financially the federal Navy over the state naval militias needs to be investigated more fully.

There could be a number of reasons for this support of a better subsidized federal Navy over state naval militias. Clearly, given their choice, many like Jefferson would have preferred to see the Navy decentralized and supported by the states. However, international events, prohibitive costs, and active lobbying by the regular Navy lead to the financial support of the regular Navy at the expense and decline of the state naval militias.

International events in this period required the formation of a naval force that had blue water capabilities over the gunboat navy envisioned by Jefferson. Dealing with Barbary Coast pirates, enforcing the Monroe Doctrine, and securing and safeguarding trade as exemplified by the efforts of Commodore Perry in Japan clearly showed the need and usefulness of a federal blue water navy over Jefferson's proposed coastal gunboat navy. Jefferson himself must have realized the need for a manpower pool to man his gunboat navy. Jefferson supported efforts to form a 50,000-man Naval Militia similiar to the "Marine Miltia" esablished in France.

Costs of building, equipping, and maintaining ships also forced the decision to support a federal Navy over state militias. The cost of a single fully equipped frigate which exceeded \$302,000 could not be easily borne by a single political entity other than the federal government.<sup>7</sup> The states had experienced the high costs of running naval militias during the Revolution and were either unwilling or unable to assume those costs during this period.



Equally decisive in the decline of the Naval Militia was the lobbying of the regular Navy. The officers of the regular Navy, supported in Congress by their advocates, saw that funding was channeled into the construction of ocean going frigates instead of smaller coastal gunboats. Part of the reason for this was the ineffectiveness of the Navy Department during the early years. One reason for this was the fact that operational commanders of the Navy exercised more influence over the civilian administration of the Navy Department than did their army counterparts over the War Department. The establishment of a board of senior officers in 1816 to advise the Secretary of the Navy on various matters ensured that the views of the regular Navy were expressed at the expense of supporters of state naval militias. It was not until 1842 that the Navy Department was able to develop an efficient internal organization that would allow for debate of the naval militia issue.<sup>8</sup> Equally important during this period was the development of a professional officer corps in the Navy. With the introduction of a Naval School, first in Philadelphia and then at its permanent home in Annapolis, Maryland, the Navy had a new means of training its officer.

Domestic politics also was a cause for the lack of development of naval militias. Federalists, before Jefferson ever took office, decreased the size of the Navy by dismissing all but forty officers and selling off twenty ships.<sup>9</sup> Republicans for fiscal reasons and Federalists for political concerns could never reach a consensus on the issue of developing a viable Naval Militia. Despite two legislative

attempts in the early 1800s, Congress was unable to adopt legislation authorizing a Naval Militia.

Thus in the period leading up to the Civil War, the Navy diverged from the army in that it was largely a federal force, while the army was still composed of state militias.

### Civil War

The Civil War and its aftermath was the event that had the greatest effect on developing a need for a naval militia or naval reserve. While the regular Navy had grown during the period between the Revolution and the Civil War, it was woefully inadequate and underfunded when the first shots were fired at Fort Sumtner in Charleston Harbor in 1861. The federal fleet that was to oppose the Confederacy suffered a number of shortcomings. Official Navy histories of the period have highlighted some of these deficiencies. First, the federal fleet was composed of ships of low quality that had not been able to or willing to adapt to newer technological systems in the areas of propulsion, weapons, and armor that their European counterparts had successfully fielded. Second, budget shortfalls meant over two-thirds of the ninety ship navy were not in service when hostilities commenced. Finally, the federal Navy was over extended. Of the thirty ships in commission and serviceable, only four were in home waters when the Civil War broke out. And the Navy could muster only 207 men to operate them, with another 7,600 men operating warships at oversea stations. While some sailors did leave the Union Navy to join the Confederacy, they were never in the numbers that affected the Union army.<sup>10</sup>

Clearly, the Navy was in no position to establish an effective blockade of the 3,500 mile southern coastline with only thirty ships. The mission of blockading the southern ports was necessary for two reasons. First, it supported President Lincoln's war plans of strangling the Confederacy: referred to as the "Anaconda Strategy." Second, the mission of establishing an effective blockade was necessary to meet the requirements of the "Declaration of Paris" (the "Declaration of Paris" was an attempt by the international community to develop laws for wars at sea). Failure to provide the sufficient combat force to blockade southern ports as defined in the "Declaration of Paris" would have allowed the British or French to intervene on the behalf of the Confederacy.<sup>11</sup>

Quickly the Congress acted. Congressional authorizations for new ships resulted in a larger fleet and by the end of 1861 the Navy had grown from 90 to 427 ships. Additional requirements in support of riverine operations meant that the Navy would grow even larger. Between 1861 and 1865, the ships of the Navy increased by 751 percent. Manning these vessels then became a problem.<sup>12</sup>

Had there been an effective Naval Militia during the antebellum period, the manning difficulties might have been easily and quickly resolved. However, since this was not the case, the Navy suffered throughout the war with personnel shortages that hampered operations. Admirals A. T. Mahan and F. N. Luce later commented that the pace of operations was not what it could have been--had a program to expand personnel strength quickly to meet wartime needs existed. In all mission areas, restrictive manpower pools hampered operations more

than limited availability of operational platforms. For all of the Mississippi River riverine fleet there were only thirty replacement seamen at one point in Grant's Vicksburg campaign.<sup>13</sup> In an effort to resolve some of these the personnel issues, reserve commissions were offered to retired naval officers. Also, "volunteer" officers were appointed from the ranks of merchantmen with extensive seagoing experience. The experiences of the Volunteer Navy was carefully scrutinized during the war. The New York Times looked to the Volunteer Navy as way for the country to "do without the enormous naval establishment it will be otherwise necessary to keep at prodigious cost." The editors at the New York Times argued the volunteer navy represented an "elastic economic temporary Navy--easily formed in the times of war, and easily transformed in times of peace."<sup>14</sup>

The Volunteer Navy provided much of the manpower as the Navy increased in personnel by 555 percent during the Civil War.<sup>15</sup> This is, essentially what should have been provided from effective state naval militias had they existed. However, there were never enough volunteers for the Navy to fully overcome shortages that plagued the Navy throughout the war. Part of the reason for lack of volunteers could possibly be traced to the fact that they were an extemporaneous organization that did not have the organizational history and esprit the land militias had. More importantly, the volunteers never seemed as plentiful as necessary because of their conditions of employment. First, they were paid much less than they had been in their civilian shipping jobs. River boat crewmen earned as much as \$30 a month on a civilian paddle wheeler while earning only \$18 a month in the same job

in the Navy.<sup>16</sup> Secondly, most merchantmen were unsuited or unwilling to accept the discipline of the regular Navy. This situation was further exacerbated when the Navy discontinued the practice of serving a daily ration of a "gill of whiskey."<sup>17</sup> A third and final problem, in attracting volunteers to the Navy, especially officers, was the resentment heaped upon them by officers of the regular Navy. Part of the resentment stemmed from the fact that volunteer officers earned promotions faster than regular officers based on their previous and extensive seagoing experience. Unfortunately, volunteer officers also held regular officers in contempt as well. Navy documents indicate that "to the volunteers, the major difference between themselves and the regulars was that the government had educated and maintained academy officers at public expense while volunteers had learned the arduous ways of the sea on their own."<sup>18</sup>

Navy officials attempted to mitigate these resentments. Rules were instituted to ensure an equitable distribution of promotions. But by the end of war, the volunteer officers were still serving in lower ranks despite the fact that Congress in 1864 provided for their promotion to Commander and Lieutenant Commander. The following table shows this inequity:<sup>19</sup>

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Regulars</u>	<u>Volunteers</u>
Commander	112	0
Lt Commander	144	7
Lieutenant	107	71

The Civil War and the impact it had on the navy can be interpreted to have significance for the coming movement to establish naval reserves and naval militias in the years following. Four lessons from the Civil War became important for the growing naval militia movement that will be discussed in detail later in this thesis. These four lessons are as follows:

First, the size of the navy before the Civil War was woefully inadequate. If the United States was to survive in a conflict with European powers after the Civil War, a large modern navy would be necessary.

Second, it would be difficult to man, with experienced and qualified personnel, this new larger navy. The Civil War experience showed that a rapid expansion of ships was possible, but a rapid expansion of manpower would be difficult. During this period naval vessels could be built quite rapidly, while a trained and experienced seaman or officer took years to develop. Therefore, some means of providing for a trained reserve of sailors to man armed vessels was necessary to avoid the shortfalls experienced during the civil war.

Third, a large navy and the personnel needed to operate it would be expensive, perhaps prohibitively so. A means was needed to provide for a large modern force when needed without the necessary expense it would incur when not needed. The service of the Volunteer Navy, coupled with the military tradition of the United States which relied heavily on the use of the militia, clearly offered a paradigm for establishing the Naval Militia.

Fourth, there were strained relations between regular and volunteer officers, with each group resenting the other. Thus, the need for naval militias would have to be pursued by individuals normally outside the Navy Department. Any attempt to form a volunteer navy along the lines of reserves or naval militias would be opposed by many of the Navy's regular operational commanders.

These lessons form the basis from which a movement to form naval militias and a naval reserve sprang in the later half of the nineteenth century.

## CHAPTER 4

### NAVAL MILITIA MOVEMENT

#### Post Civil War Years

The years following the Civil War to the turn of century were the most important for naval militias in the United States. It was during this period that naval militias entered a resurgence, and numerous states authorized and funded naval militias.

At the end of Civil War, the United States found itself with a navy larger than what it thought it needed or could afford. Between 1866 and 1879, Congress passed numerous acts to resolve disparities between the regular and volunteer officers still in service. Congress authorized a statutory board, on which the Navy Department would have no influence, to appoint a certain number of volunteer officers to the regular Navy. During this period the Navy began to deliberately discharge the volunteer officers it had needed during the Civil War and reverted to a small navy manned by professionals from the regular component. Between 1866 and 1871, the regular Navy had shrunk from 671 ships and 51,000 enlisted men to 52 ships and 8,500 men.<sup>1</sup> While the experiences of the Civil War had shown that the Navy would need to rely on civilian sailors to meet its wartime needs no effort--despite the traditions of the land forces to rely heavily on the state militias for forces--was made by the Navy Department to develop or organize a reserve or system of state naval militias.



During 1873, there was a half-hearted attempt by some of the former officers displaced from their positions following the Civil War to establish a Naval Reserve, but lacking strong support from the Navy Department and the regular officers of the Navy, it failed. Amazingly, despite the manning problems that it had encountered during the Civil War, the Navy was unwilling to support any effort to remedy such problems. Impetus to resolve such manning issues had to come from the civilians who were concerned with nation's security. The merchant marine interests were the leading proponent for establishing naval reserves or, failing that, naval militias.

It was not until twenty years after the Civil War that a true movement for establishment of a Naval Militia began to coalesce. Harold Wieand discusses this period in detail in his 1953 dissertation on the Naval Reserve. However, his beginning date of 1887 for the movement and the reasons for the movement he offers does not necessarily, I believe, coincide. Wieand argues that by 1887 the frontier was closed and America was looking to oversea expansion, making a Navy even more important.<sup>2</sup> However, the frontier was not considered officially closed until 1890, and the assumptions of the historian Frederick Jackson Turner, although today disputed by many, did not receive wide spread attention until the turn of the century. Clearly, the interest of the American people in looking beyond their borders for new markets cannot be discounted in the formative years of the Naval Militia. I would offer, though, that the parochial interests of the merchant marine industry had more influence on this matter than previous investigators of this subject have suggested.

A review of the period indicates the United States Merchant Marine was at its nadir. While shipping losses during the Civil War cannot be discounted as one source for this decline, the fact that many ships were sold or reflagged under foreign ownership also dramatically aided in the decline of the merchant marine industry in the United States. The "tariff question" dominated the period politically. Therefore, the pecuniary interests of the merchant marine industry would be served by the formation of the Naval Militia.

#### Naval Militia Legislation

In January 1888, Congressman Washington C. Whitthorne, a former adjutant general of the Tennessee Militia during the Civil War, introduced the a bill "for the enrollment of a naval militia and the organization of naval forces."<sup>3</sup> This proposed legislation is important for a number of reasons.

First, it was not the first attempt at establishing auxiliary naval forces. An attempt in February 1887 to establish a Naval Reserve failed. Second, this bill along with the earlier naval reserve bill really was an attempt to revive the declining maritime industry. Third, naval militias were an afterthought. Legislation was originally designed to establish a Naval Reserve rather than a Naval Militia. Fourth, both bills found more support from Chambers of Commerce than from officials inside the Navy Department.

Support was most noticeable amongst the Chambers of Commerce of large cities along both the east and west coast. Additionally, while the legislation addressed manning, it also provided for subsidies to the merchant marine industry. The Whitthorne bill of 1888, allowed for

"States and territories bordering on the sea and lake coasts or on navigable rivers, to enroll and designate as the Naval Militia all seafaring men of whatever calling or occupation." Included were provisions to include men engaged in ship construction or management, yacht owners and members of yacht clubs."<sup>4</sup> By allowing such broad interpretation of whom could be enrolled in the Naval Militia, the Whitthorne bill provided for the manpower pool that the regular Navy lacked at the outbreak of the Civil War. The Whitthorne bill modeled the Naval Militia after the Royal Navy Artillery Volunteers. Under this bill, the state naval militias would augment the regular Navy with personnel trained in gunnery and landing force operations. Officers appointed by the states would command the units in wartime and the regular Navy would supervise their training.

By and large, the most interesting elements of the Whitthorne bill had to deal with subsidies to the merchant marine industry. The bill provided for the use of civilian merchant men to augment the numbers of small cruisers. Any vessel enrolled into the program would receive a mileage compensation based on factors, such as tonnage, speed, and distance steamed. During the debate on the Whitthorne bill, the elements concerning subsidies received the most attention.<sup>5</sup>

Unfortunately, the second Whitthorne bill met the same fate as the original bill and was defeated. Its importance lays in the fact it became the basis by which states formed their own naval militias. Massachusetts was the first state to enact legislation to establish an effective Naval Militia. Lieutenant J. C. Soley, USN, while Naval Attache to France, conducted an extensive review of the European systems

of naval reserves and militias and was one of the early proponents of a naval reserve over naval militias.<sup>6</sup> However, upon release from active duty he moved to Massachusetts and became an early convert to the naval militia system. On 17 May 1888, the commonwealth of Massachusetts made legislation provision for establishing four companies of naval militia which would be known as the Naval Battalion of the Volunteer Militia.<sup>7</sup> The act made the Naval Battalion separate and in addition to land forces. Rhode Island and Pennsylvania followed in April of 1889, followed by New York in June 1889.<sup>8</sup>

New York, although it did not pass its Naval Militia Act until after creation of naval militias in Rhode Island and Pennsylvania, was the next state to seriously take up the initiative of establishing a naval militia. Interestingly, the standard bearers of this initiative were the members of the New York Board of Trade and Transportation. To support their efforts, they contacted most of the steamship owners and yachtsman in the state. Of equal interest was that letters to the board of trade from Admiral Porter and General Schofield suggested that they would support the effort of establishing naval militias as long as it was under strong federal control.<sup>9</sup> Admiral Porters support is unique in that his support for both of the earlier Whitthorne bills was luke warm at best. Admiral Porter had been a vociferous critic of the Naval Volunteers of the Civil War and had written "do not send any more officers down until required--I am sorry to observe the standard getting lower and lower."<sup>10</sup> In March of 1891, California established a Naval Battalion and later in that year North Carolina established a Naval Artillery Battalion. Texas also established a Naval Militia in 1891 and

Maryland designated its Oyster Police as a Naval Militia in 1891. In 1893, Illinois established a Naval Militia.

Part of the reason that so many states began naval militias during this period was the financial incentives provided to them by Congress. On 2 March 1891, Congress authorized \$25,000 to support state naval militias on a *pro rata* basis.<sup>11</sup> By October 1893, there were 2,376 men enrolled in naval militias units around the country.<sup>12</sup> Additional support from Congress in August 1894, authorized the Navy to lend ships, boats and shipboard equipment to naval militias. The Navy Department started the practice of allowing members of the Naval Militia to drill aboard navy ships. New York Naval Militia drilled aboard the USS *Minnesota* and Massachusetts Naval Battalion drilled aboard the USS *Wabash*. By the end of 1894, New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, North Carolina and California Naval Militias all possessed ships lent to them by the regular Navy.

The initial experiment with naval militias began to wane in 1894 for a number of reasons. By 1894 there were 3,339 men enrolled in the state naval militias. After this point enrollment declined. The decline can be traced to the following four causes:

First, equipment loaned to the naval militias was the worst that the Navy had. Many of the boats were even condemned. Secretary of the Navy Hilary A. Herbert wrote in 1897: "Only such boats as were unsuitable for service could be loaned to the Naval Militia and the small number of 'condemned boats' was thus soon exhausted; but boats unsuitable for naval purposes are ill adapted for drills and exercises."<sup>13</sup> Without adequate equipment with which to train, the men

of the Naval Militia were unable to meet the standards set for them by the regular Navy. Without first rate modern equipment the Naval Militia would never become a source of trained manpower.

Second, funding was inadequate. The size of the Naval Militia had grown rapidly during this period; but, the federal funding remained static. For example, in 1899, the Navy reported deficiency in funding of over \$1,000,000 and of over \$2,000,000 in 1900. Clearly, unable to get by on its own budget of over \$84,000,000 the Navy was in no position to help economically strapped state naval militias.<sup>14</sup>

Third, poor organizational control caused problems as well. States that exercised adequate control over their state naval militias experienced high levels of readiness. Those states that abrogated these responsibilities had poor naval militias. For example, the San Diego Naval Militia was routinely inspected by its higher headquarters within the state and had received excellent marks on inspections made by regular officers visiting the unit and when they reported for service aboard federal ships for their summer cruises. By 1895, the Navy's Militia Affairs Administrator, Lieutenant A. P. Niblack, declared that the question of control of naval militias and the responsibilities of the states and Navy Department needed to be resolved.<sup>15</sup>

Fourth, morale was declining as the aim and purpose of the militias were being questioned. In 1894, there was a growing debate in the regular Navy whether the naval militiamen should be used in the role of coastal defense or as a general reserve for fleet assets. This debate not only focused on the role of naval militiamen but on the role of the Navy as well. One school of thought argued forcefully for the

superiority of coastal defenses. Another school, led by then Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Theodore Roosevelt, argued that the United States Navy should become an offensive power. Roosevelt argued that a war of mere defense "never pays and can never result in anything but disaster....No master of the prize ring ever fought his way to supremacy by mere dexterity in avoiding punishment."<sup>16</sup>

Despite misgivings and problems, the naval militia movement did receive praise from regular naval officers of the period. Rear Admiral R. W. Meade of the North Atlantic Squadron considered the militia important trainable assets. He wrote:

I look upon them not as landsman qualifying as seamen, but rather as cadets under drill, qualifying themselves to fill the place our merchant officers did at the outbreak of the Civil War....In event of a maritime war, our greatest need would be intelligent officers in lower grades. These the Naval Militia can surely supply. <sup>17</sup>

#### Spanish American War

When war broke out with Spain in 1898, the regular Navy envisioned the following roles for the state naval militias. The wartime functions of the Naval Militia were to be coastal defense, operating converted ships as auxiliary cruisers, providing gunners, engineers, and seamen for regular navy ships, and providing men who would be trained as officers. Debate on the Naval Militia's role in conflicts took in two arguments. One group, lead by Admiral A. T. Mahan, argued that naval militias should be generalists ready to come under the command of the regular Navy and be integrated into the overall mobilization of the fleets. Another group, lead by Secretary of the Navy, Benjamin F. Tracy, argued persuasively that "the naval

militias should be used to perform one function well vice many haphazardly."<sup>19</sup> In 1896, a Naval War College study suggested that the Naval Militia should establish itself as a mosquito fleet of second line defense. Comprised of harbor defense craft that could "sting" any enemy forces that should have slipped by the Navy's main battle fleets. Despite this study, in 1896, the Secretary of the Navy, Hillary Herbert, decided that the "naval militias would be integrated into the overall mobilization plan and to specify locations to be mined, shore batteries, and signal stations to be manned, and specific ships to be used."<sup>20</sup>

An important and sympathetic friend of the Naval Militia during this period, was the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Theodore Roosevelt. After inspecting naval militia units in New York, Ohio, Michigan, and Illinois, Roosevelt expressed a desire to see their use aboard fleet ships giving priority to bringing peacetime complements to wartime strengths. In a report dated 7 August 1897, Roosevelt suggested the following:

Most of the naval militia are now in condition to render immediate service of a very valuable kind in what might be called the second line of defense. They could operate signal stations, help handle torpedoes and mines, man auxiliary cruisers, and assist in defense points not covered by the Army....Furthermore, the highest and best trained bodies could be used immediately on board regular ships of war.<sup>21</sup>

During the course of the Spanish American War, the Naval Militia compiled an impressive record of achievements that should have alleviated the fears of their most vociferous detractors in the regular Navy. Despite having no war mobilization plans, the men of the Naval Militia responded rapidly to the call of arms. The Navy enlisted strength rose from 12,500 men to 24,123, including an increase of 3,832



men provided by the Naval Militia.<sup>22</sup> The Naval Militia provided 2,400 men for the auxiliary cruiser fleet while the regular fleet used 1,200 naval militia personnel.<sup>23</sup> Unlike the models used by European armies that had large staffs and years to work out the complicated timetables necessary for mobilization, mobilization of the Naval Militia was completed quickly by Commander Horace Elmer, USN one month prior to the war with Spain.<sup>24</sup> Causing consternation to the mobilization process was the laws under which the naval militias were mobilized. Congress enacted on 26 May 1898, a joint resolution establishing a 3000 man Naval Auxiliary Force.<sup>25</sup> Unfortunately, as written, the legislation would not allow the militia units already called to service to be enrolled as a unit, and as such, individuals had to enlist individually into the auxiliary force. Despite this problem, many naval militias ignored state and federal statutes to complete their assigned missions. The fact that this was done was do in part to the great patriotism of some these units. For example, despite state law prohibiting serving out of state, New York's Naval Militia went to Philadelphia to pick-up and place in service a harbor gunboat and brought it back to New York harbor. Even more impressive is that they did this without monetary inducement.<sup>26</sup>

Operationally, the Naval Militia excelled in a number of areas. The refurbishment of harbor monitors earned them accolades. Ten old and beat up harbor monitors were returned to the regular Navy in better shape than when they had been issued. The Chief of United States Naval Auxiliary Forces claimed these harbor monitors "were so readily handled by their officers and crews that it is fair to believe that the coast

defense vessels in the future could be turned over to the Naval Militia with entire confidence."<sup>25</sup>

Another naval militia success story was the cruiser USS *Yosemite* manned mostly by men from the Michigan State Naval Brigade. Commanded by Lieutenant Truman Newberry, a Michigan Naval Militia officer, who ten years later would become Secretary of the Navy, the USS *Yosemite* saw action off the coast of Cuba and as the only ship present off Puerto Rico had success in numerous engagements with superior Spanish forces. The success of this ship and others manned by personnel from the Naval Militia has lead naval historian John Spears to claim: "If anyone had doubted the efficiency of our auxiliary cruisers manned by naval militia, the work off San Juan in June dispelled it entirely."<sup>26</sup>

Despite the successes of the Naval Militia during the Spanish American War, a number of deficiencies also existed that would eventually lead to the formation of naval reserves and the decline of naval militias. The rise of the Naval Reserve at the expense of the Naval Militia will be discussed in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 5

### BIRTH OF THE NAVAL RESERVE AND DECLINE OF NAVAL MILITIAS

#### The Association of Naval Militias

Inextricably interwoven within the history of the Naval Militia is the formation and rise of the Naval Reserve. A careful review of this evolution and what it meant to the Naval Militia is very important to this study. Equally important to the history of the Naval Militia, but found in no other studies on this matter, is the importance of the establishment of military missions for the Coast Guard and Coast Guard Auxillary and Reserves and the Marine Corps Reserve which will be discussed later in this chapter.

The most important element in the overall decline of the Naval Militia took root when a formally recognized Naval Reserve was established. Of even greater interest is the fact that officers of the various state naval militias were instrumental in creating the Naval Reserve--the very organization that would eclipse and lead to the decline of the Naval Militia.

The Association of Naval Militias was the most important and influential group in arguing before Congress for a more powerful and better financed Naval Militia. As early as 1895, the New York Times began reporting on the endeavors of the Association of Naval Militias and throughout the next twenty years the Association of Naval Militias was a formidable and most successful lobbying group for the interests of

the Naval Militias.<sup>1</sup> The Naval Militia Association grew out of the Naval Reserve Association which was established in January 1890. The organization was composed of prominent yachtsmen, and included as charter members Theodore C. Zerega, August Belmont, Herbet Satterlee, and J. Peirpont Morgan who donated \$5,000 to start the organization.<sup>2</sup> As the Naval Militia began to expand as a result of the Spanish American War, many of the senior officers of the the Naval Reserve Association formed the Naval Militia Association in order to assist new militia units in organizing and training. The success of the Association of Naval Militias can best be attributed to three factors.

First, there never seemed to be any major organized opposition to the legislation concerning the interests of naval militias. In numerous articles in the New York Times during this period very little was ever written about efforts against the association. In its annual reports throughout the period, the association itself gives the same impression. While the annual reports of the Association of Naval Militias still stress the friction between the militias and the Navy Department, they do not ever state that a formal or formidable opposition were opposing them.<sup>3</sup> If friction did exist, it was often with their counterparts in the state's National Guard. Part of the friction could be attributed to the Naval Militia members themselves who thought they were a cut above the National Guardsman. Equally important was the limited number of Naval Militiamen in each state and the fact that they were subsidized by the federal government. In any case, the National Guard organizations had little to do with the Naval Militias in their state even though they, on paper, controlled them.

Second, the Association of Naval Militias were comprised of some of the most influential business people in the United States. A review of the New York State delegation attests to this point. A Vanderbilt was a prominent spokesman and much of that state's association business was conducted at the New York Yacht Club.<sup>4</sup> Reports of the activities of the Naval Militia often appeared on the social pages of the newspapers and the annual reports never fail to mention the support the Naval Militia provided to various balls and social events.<sup>5</sup> While to say its primary importance was social would be an over simplification, the social aspects and importance of the Naval Militia cannot and should not be overlooked.

Third, the Association of Naval Militias was successful because it did have some support within the Navy Department. While many of the professional officers of the Navy still looked with forbearance on their Naval Militia counterparts, they were also professional enough to understand that the Naval Militia did provide a useful and a most necessary manpower pool for the United States Navy. Secretary of the Navy, William H. Hunt, was an early advocate of the Naval Militia, along with Captain Augustus P. Cooke, head of the New York Branch of the Naval Institute, and prominent naval officers such as Admiral Porter, Head of the Navigation Bureau, and J. G. Walker were proponents of some form of naval militia or national reserves.<sup>6</sup> Kevin Hart in an article in The American Neptune has argued that had the Navy Department been more forthcoming and active in its support of the activities of the Association of Naval Militias important legislation dealing with the

Naval Militia and possibly the formation of a true national Naval Reserve would have occurred much earlier.<sup>7</sup>

#### Naval Militia Act of 1914

By 1914, due to the heavy lobbying efforts of the Association of Naval Militias, the United States Congress, had passed legislation that had failed at least four times previously. The Naval Militia Act of 1914 was instrumental in defining the organizational relationship of the state naval militias with respect to federal supervision by the Navy Department. This pioneering legislation defined the relationships that the state naval militias would have with the federal government. The legislative made it legally possible for the President, as commander in chief of the armed forces, to call out the Naval Militia when either a national emergency or a state of war existed.<sup>8</sup>

Perhaps the most important and controversial aspect of the Naval Militia Act of 1914 concerned pay. The act provided for compensation to the Naval Militia for training duty. Members of the State Naval Militias were now able to be paid from federal coffers when they were under orders from the Secretary of the Navy. The Naval Militia Act provided that the officers and men of the Naval Militias were to receive pay, transportation, and subsistence as equals to their regular counterparts.<sup>9</sup> While a breakthrough for the Naval Militia, this compensation that treated them as equals with their regular counterparts was enacted a full eleven years after similar legislation for land militias provided the same equal compensation. The Dick Act of 1903, provided for much the same in terms of monetary compensation for land militias and was used as a model for the Naval Militia Act of 1914.<sup>6</sup>

The Naval Militia Act of 1914 also set up and established priorities for recall of officers and men to the Navy in times of war and national emergencies. While the act did allow, as previously explained, the President to call out the Naval Militia, it did not grant the government unlimited use of the Naval Militia. The Secretary of the Navy interpreted the Constitution and Naval Militia Act of 1914 as limiting the use of the Naval Militia "for limited duty within inside the territorial limits of the United States."<sup>10</sup> While this did not necessarily please the Association of Naval Militias and certain elements of the Navy, it did provide for the federal use of the Naval Militia. Equally, it required the call up of the Naval Militia and Naval Reserve before the use of volunteers to increase the size of the Navy in any emergency or conflict. What should be noted is that the act provided for the call up the Naval Reserve before the Naval Militia even though the Naval Reserve did not yet exist.

To administer the provisions of the Naval Militia Act of 1914, the old Office of Naval Militia was disestablished and a new Division of Naval Militia Affairs established. Commander F. B. Bassett was made the first officer-in-charge of the new division (it was a smooth transition as Bassett was previously the head of the Office of Naval Militia).<sup>11</sup> Also established was a Naval Militia General Board. The board was comprised of naval militia officers appointed by the Secretary of the Navy. The board was comprised of five Naval Militia officers, all of whom had been quite active in the Association of Naval Militias. The first members were: R.P. Forshew of New York, C.D. Bordham of North Carolina, E.A. Evers of Illinois, J.M. Mitcheson of Pennsylvania, and

J.T. McMellan of California.<sup>12</sup> Its mission was to advise the Navy Department on the establishment of professional examinations of officers and enlisted men and in developing procedures to carry out other aspects of the Naval Militia Act of 1914.

According to all accounts, the work of the board and of the new Division of Naval Militias was a success.<sup>13</sup> The Division of Naval Militias immediately began work and established the rules governing the integration of the Naval Militia with the Department of the Navy in certain key areas. Instructions concerning pay accounts, record keeping, education, inspections, gunnery, and transportation to name a few were sent to all the various state naval militias. Despite what many would have considered interference on the part of the federal Navy, most of the Naval Militias welcomed the new found interests in their organization. Official documents from this period indicate few problems between the Naval Militia and the new Division of Naval Militias in the Chief of Naval Operations Office.<sup>14</sup> In fact, with new found interest in the Naval Militia by the federal government, many states also took up a renewed interest. In California, for example, the Naval Militia was increased in size from twelve to fourteen divisions and a group of Marines were also authorized.<sup>15</sup> The California legislature provided that any man serving in the Naval Militia for fifteen years could retire at the rank above which he served last--in effect a promotion upon retirement. Following the enactment of the Naval Militia Act of 1914 on 16 February 1914, Texas and Hawaii established Naval Militias--the last state and territory to do so. At this time there were 24 state, territorial, and district naval militias.<sup>16</sup>



Most importantly, the renewed interest in the Naval Militia by the Navy Department meant that more training assets would become available to the states. The concern of the Navy Department in the training of the Naval Militia was primary. In Boston, for example, the Naval Militia was given access to a laid up destroyer that in the past had been repeatedly denied.<sup>17</sup> The Navy Department now found it hard to deny requests from naval militias, even though many regular naval officers accused them of misusing and damaging government property which cost the government "a good deal of money to repair the damage."<sup>18</sup>

Despite this tone, the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Franklin Roosevelt, was an ardent supporter of the Naval Militia. Shortly after passage of the Naval Militia Act in 1914, he wrote: "The efficiency of some of the Naval Militia organizations is very high....We could probably make them absolutely efficient on board ship with two or three weeks of training alongside of regulars."<sup>19</sup> When repeatedly questioned on the issue of readiness of naval militia units, Roosevelt laid the blame at the feet of recalcitrant officers in the Navy Department who refused to support the Naval Militias with training assets. Again, Roosevelt writes: "to render good service in an emergency...the Navy apparently expects them to prepare for service without giving them proper material to work with."<sup>20</sup> His most forceful argument is for expanding the cadre of Naval Militia officers and enlisted men.

Roosevelt argues:

The only way to build a reserve corresponding with what the Navy wanted and the country needed was to offer them greater facilities, to make it more attractive to the average private citizen and business man, or anybody in private walks of life, to spend a certain length of time outside business hours, and take that length of time away from his play hours, and do some

pretty stiff work. Those facilities would be in the nature of better equipment to be provided by the Federal Government or by the States; additionally the government needed to provide better ships to give them a greater opportunity to be out with the with the fleet.<sup>21</sup>

Though adamant on the need to improve the facilities of the naval militias, Roosevelt was unwilling to provide any navy ships. When this subject was broached during congressional discussions he laments that the Navy was "right down to the bone on ships."<sup>22</sup>

While the Naval Militia Act of 1914 was considered a success and important to the continued development of the Naval Militia it did suffer from a few shortcomings and in 1915 efforts began to revise that piece of legislation. Legislation proposed to modify the act was subject of much discussion.<sup>23</sup>

#### Naval Militia Act of 1915

The Naval Militia Act of 1915 provided for a modification of the Naval Militia Act of 1914. The provisions of the act dealt mostly with incentives needed to increase the enrollment of able bodied men into the Naval Militia. Some of the incentives in the Naval Militia Act of 1915 included the privilege of obtaining a discharge from the Naval Militia in time of peace were made statutory. Civil Service preferences were set up for men who had sixteen or more years of active service transferred to the militias. The opportunity to join the Naval Militia up to ten years after discharge from the regular Navy and receive the same pay as those who were most recently discharged from the regular Navy was important to attract more men. Increased pension benefits were also approved to increase enrollments. Additionally, the act provided

for some other minor revisions to clarify certain provisions of the earlier law.<sup>24</sup>

Clearly, then, the Naval Militia Act of 1915 was geared towards the enrollment of more men into the Naval Militia. While the studies cited thus far, have been content to address the legislative aspects of this act a more useful approach would be to address the subtle change that was going on inside the Navy that made the use of Naval Militiamen and their increased enrollment so important.

The United States Navy was now the world's second largest navy, eclipsed only by Great Britain's Royal Navy. With war in Europe appearing more and more imminent, the regular Navy was still reluctant to allow the states to operate warships it had in lay-up for use in possible hostilities. Franklin Roosevelt, normally a strong supporter of the Naval Militia, as previously stated, would not give up additional assets as "it would materially weaken our force of destroyers available for war purposes." Upon hearing this, a congressman from South Carolina argued, "As I understand it, you want to encourage these naval militia men, but do not want to give them anything to practice on."<sup>25</sup>

Reeling from congressional criticism for its lack of material support of the Naval Militia and having a large number of ships in lay-up, the Navy found in its own best interest, to adopt a system that the Royal Navy had put in place decades earlier. Modeled after the British system, the Navy established a regular-reserve crew mix of ships in lay-up replacing the one or two watchmen it had previously used. The new system slowly evolved as the Navy came to need the services of the Naval Militia. Initially, a system was established that the ships would have

on board one-third of its regular complement to be supplemented with a large number of sailor from shore establishments. While this practice was thought to mean a ship would be ready to go to sea in as little as 48 hours, the practice and testimony of the leading naval authorities of the day disputed this optimistic prediction. During congressional testimony, the Secretary of the Navy initially stood by his assessment of 36 to 48 hours to get ships ready.<sup>26</sup> However, the reports of most captains were that it would take three months to get ships in the highest state of battle efficiency, even using previously trained sailors. Roosevelt explained why it would take so long:

If you take a crew which has never been together before and most of whom have not been on that ship or that type of ship before, it takes them that length of time to shake down together and learn to understand all the mechanism of the ship. It takes the officers a certain length of time to find out how she maneuvers and what her speeds are, what you might say are her tactical merits and how to use them. The best example might be a football team. You may have three men left over last year's football team and you add eight new men. Those three men are the nucleus around which you build. The eight new men may be just as good football players as the three old ones, but it takes three months of practice to shake them together and bring that team to the highest state of efficiency for the football year. This applies, for example to gun crews, where perfect coordination between the individuals means the saving of many seconds between the firing of each shot. That example of the gun crews applies to the working of whole battleship.<sup>27</sup>

The Naval Militia became the answer to the Navy's problem. The Naval Militia wanted and needed ships to train on. The Navy needed trained crews that could work its ships in reserve instead of using regular Navy personnel from shore stations. The solution to the problem appeared to be the use of naval militia units to man reserve navy ships in conjunction with a small fulltime regular Navy crew. Such a solution was proposed based on a recently completed study of the Royal Navy and

their use of reserve crews. Many regular officers were skeptical of such arrangements. The Naval Militia still had detractors in the regular Navy and, as noted above, its use in previous conflicts had been suspect. Equally misleading, was the notion that hastily assembled contingents of sailors could solve the nation's maritime manpower shortages during war. As the complexity of naval systems increased so did the training required to use those systems efficiently and skillfully in battle--training of hastily assembled groups would not have worked.

A campaign was undertaken by Captain Bassett in the Division of Naval Militia on the Chief of Naval Operations staff to shore up the public image of the Naval Militia. This was done not only to attract more qualified members to Naval Militia units, but, to increase their acceptance within the professional officer corps of the regular Navy. Articles in the Naval Institute periodical Proceedings noted that the Naval Militia man was "no holiday sailor, but a capable man-of-war's man."<sup>28</sup> A report of the New York State Naval Militia's successful cruise aboard the USS *Alabama* was also circulated. The captain of the USS *Alabama* reported that with two weeks of training the New York Naval Militia would have been able to make the ship ready for battle.<sup>29</sup>

Seeing the utility of using the Naval Militia as crews aboard regular Navy ships and also owing that naval militia crews would keep the ships in better shape than if they were simply mothballed, the Navy began assigning ships to the Naval Militia. By 1916, three old battleships and five destroyers were assigned to naval militias. The battleship USS *Kearsarge* was sent to the Massachusetts Naval Militia,

the USS *Kentucky* to the New York Naval Militia, and the USS *Oregon* to the California Naval Militia. Additionally, the Naval Militia in Florida received two destroyers and the Naval Militia in Texas, Louisiana, and South Carolina, received one destroyer each. During the summer months, the Navy made available as many as nine battleships to train crews from the militias.<sup>30</sup>

By the end of 1916, the mixed crew arrangements were proving to be highly successful. Training and the establishment of examination systems to certify Naval Militia for service was another innovation of this period. Qualification exams were not only required for advancement, but, to qualify for service in the active duty Navy when mobilized.

This is not to say that all was smooth sailing for the Naval Militia. The officers of the Naval Militia found themselves subordinate to regular Navy officers and they were unable to exercise any of their disciplinary powers while embarked in warships under federal control. There still continued to be many in the regular Navy that looked down upon their naval militias counterparts with contempt. Problems with certain definitions in the Naval Militia Acts of 1914 and 1915 lead to a significant revision of the Naval Militia Act in 1916, an act that would have far reaching consequences for the Naval Militia.<sup>31</sup>

#### Naval Militia Act of 1916

The Naval Militia Act of 1916, like the Naval Militia Act of 1915, set out to correct defects in preceding legislation. However, this act also did something that many had advocated for years. It formalized a national Naval Reserve independent of state control. The

1916 Act proposed five classes of Naval Reservists: A, B, C, D, E. Class A was to consist of ex-Navy men. Class B was to consist of officers and men of the merchant marine who routinely practiced their trade. These class B reservists would receive special training on Navy Ships so they could go to sea and effectively fight combatant ships in war. Class C would be made up of men assigned to auxiliary craft and therefore would need no extra training before going to sea. Class D would be men who would volunteer in time of war and would nominally be assigned duties that did not require extensive training or for them to go far from home. Class E, would be for men who might fit into the other classes but would prefer the volunteer class. For class E the navy was specifically looking for men who owned powerboats and yachts. It anticipated that the men in this class would train aboard their own craft and bring them with them when mobilized to patrol the coasts.<sup>32</sup>

As passed on 29 August 1916, the law had far reaching consequences. The classes proposed were changed from five to six. Class one, the Fleet Reserve, consisted of former officers and men of the regular Navy. Class two, known as the Naval Reserve, was made up of seagoing men suitable for service after some training. Class three, the Naval Auxillary Reserve was made up of officers and men involved in maritime trade who might be used in time of war on naval auxillaries. Class four, the Naval Coastal Defense was made up of interested individuals who would serve in their own localities. Class five, the Volunteer Naval Reserve took in anyone eligible for the other categories. Class six was designated the Naval Reserve Flying Corps and consisted of personnel with experience and interests in aviation.<sup>33</sup>

The act also created the National Naval Volunteers. The National Naval Volunteers were to be used in time of war or national emergency and they existed in a structure completely separate from the Naval Militia from which they were drawn. Even though these were Naval Militia men, they were subject to the same rules and regulations as the regular Navy. While it did establish for the first time an effective Naval Reserve under the Navy Department, it did not do away with the state naval militias. These National Naval Volunteers were essentially members of state naval militias who volunteered for national service in the Navy. The importance being that by volunteering for such service they could be used overseas. This appears to parallel the organization the Army was adopting.<sup>34</sup> What effectively happened is that a dualism was created within the reserve organization of the United States Navy which still exists today. Naval Militia members, ostensibly under state control, were now also under federal control without necessarily being federalized. And while this dualism would cause concerns later on, it proved adequate for the moment and was important to the role that Naval Militias would play in World War I.

#### World War I

World War I was the last great conflict in which naval militias would play a major role. When United States began participation in World War I, on 6 April 1917, the Secretary of the Navy, Josephus Daniels, called into federal service the Naval Militia of the various states as National Naval Volunteers. In a matter of days, 660 officers and 9,500 enlisted men of the Naval Militia were pressed into federal service. By September, the numbers had risen to 852 officers and 16,000



enlisted men. And by the end of hostilities in 1918 the overwhelming majority of Naval Militia officers and enlisted men saw some form of service with the regular Navy.<sup>35</sup> Accounts indicate that, with the exception of some destroyers in far off locations at least 25 percent of all crews on warships were either members of the Naval Reserve or the National Naval Volunteers. The Naval Militias of New York and Massachusetts were able to man ex-German liners that had been confiscated in those states when hostilities broke out.

Despite the previous efforts of training and organization, there continued to be problems with the quality of officers and enlisted men that the regular Navy was receiving from the Naval Militia. One of the reasons such problems existed may be explained by the fact many of the officers in the Naval Militia had received their commissions as a result of political favors. Numerous letters to the Naval Militia Board and the Secretary of the Navy were received from governors and congressmen during this period requesting commissions and promotions of constituents in the Naval Militia which were now the National Naval Volunteers.

One effort to combat the problems with less than qualified officers now serving alongside regular Navy officers was the institution of fitness reports and examinations. Those who failed to meet the standards were not summarily sent home, but rather the Navy provided them additional training or assigned them to duties that they could more efficiently perform. Additionally there were efforts to increase enrollments in both the Naval Reserve and the National Naval Volunteers. Special classes were set up at the Naval Academy and numerous retired naval officers were recalled to train personnel. By the end of the

1918, 290,000 Naval Reservists and National Naval Volunteers had been enrolled.<sup>36</sup>

The successes of the Naval Militia cannot be measured by numbers alone. Across a wide spectrum of jobs the National Naval Volunteers served with distinction. One member of the Michigan Naval Militia served as commanding officer of the presidential yacht, another member of that organization went on to become Secretary of the Navy. Ensign Charles Hammann, a National Naval Volunteer, was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.<sup>37</sup> And Lieutenant H.T. Stanley was the first naval aviator to be credited with the destruction of a German U-boat.<sup>38</sup>

The legacy of this period was important to the history of the Naval Militia. First and foremost, the war showed the need for a large and viable reserve force. Second, the war showed the National Naval Volunteers and the Naval Reserve could be useful organizations that could provide trained individuals for service. And finally, the war showed that there needed to be more emphasis placed on the role of the Naval Reserve and less on the role of Naval Militia.

#### Inter-War Years

Harold Wieand in his dissertation quotes then Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels from a Saturday Evening Post article praising the role of the Naval Reserves and National Naval Volunteers. Secretary Daniels said, "The Naval Reserves have been the salvation of the Navy in the war crisis."<sup>39</sup> Nonetheless, there still were problems in the organizational relationships between the Naval Militia and the regular Navy. And while these defects did not prevent the successful use of the

National Naval Volunteers during the war, they were a source of some frustration to the officers of naval militias.

Foremost among the defects that affected the officers of the Naval Militia, was the question of rank and precedence. During service with the National Naval Volunteers, officers of the Naval Militia soon found themselves being passed over by men who came on service much later than they did with the Naval Reserve. The Navy Department recognized early the disparity and unfairness of this, but, was unable to correct the deficiency without new legislation--always a problem in war and during demobilization.

A second defect, dealt with the duplication of efforts and bureaucracy within the Navy Department. Two separate administrative organizations had been established within the Navy Department. One dealt solely with issues concerning the Naval Militia and the other dealt solely with the issues affecting the Naval Reserve. More important than the elimination of the duplication, the Navy saw that bringing the Naval Militia under its control could provide an additional 17,000 men into the new Naval Reserve Force. Additionally, these men from the Naval Militia had extensive experience in running drills and training and would be a boom to the new Naval Reserve organization.<sup>40</sup>

Finally, the Navy sought to eliminate the Naval Militia because of the troubles it perceived it caused in the past. No longer would the forces of the Naval Militia be subject to the whims and political dealings of state governors and legislatures that had plagued the organization in the past.

Plans to eliminate the Naval Militia were contained in legislation shortly before the end of the war.<sup>41</sup> Surprisingly, the majority of the support for doing away with the Naval Militia came from within its own organization. Officers who had had successful experiences with the National Naval Volunteers were being hurt by the dual system. The promotion and precedence system in place placed them at a disadvantage and they were being hurt from the standpoint of money and prestige. The logical conclusion was then to do away with naval militias as an organization. A large national Naval Reserve unhampered by the influences of the state governments was the logical choice. Equally important to the members of the new Naval Reserve would be the better pay and training opportunities that they would accrue once under the effective control of the Navy Department

Legislation was approved on 1 July 1918 that should have effectively ended the Naval Militia by taking away its federal mission.<sup>42</sup> The Secretary of the Navy provide an explanation and reason for the passage of the Naval Reserve Act of 1918:

As the operation of various laws were given their tryout in actual war they were found to be excellent. It became evident, however, that in having both the National Naval Volunteers and the Naval Reserve Force, the Federal Government was maintaining in time of peace two organizations with the same purpose in time of war: to supply reserve manpower. This duplication was obviously wasteful and unwieldy in various ways, so steps were taken to amalgamate. It was seen that individual State effort as exemplified in the militia would result in providing a number of miniature navies, and that Naval Militia, even though it could change into National Naval Volunteers, was less efficient of the two methods in developing trained manpower. It was therefore decided to work out a means of amalgamating the "Volunteers" with the "Reserve Force."<sup>43</sup>

Even though the Navy had the most to gain from the consolidation of the Naval Militia and the Naval Reserve, it was the officers from the Naval Militia Association that actively lobbied for the passage of the act. In the end, the passage of the act meant that naval militias would play much less of a role or be a significant factor in the national defense policy of the United States. Most of the naval militias disbanded at this point and most of their members were enrolled automatically in the Naval Reserve. Those states that did maintain Naval Militias received very little federal aid and then by law only if the members of their state Naval Militia were also members of the Naval Reserve. It is this pattern that still exists today.

Not all members of the Naval Militia were satisfied with their new found status, although the vast majority were. Further legislative refinements were also made to delineate the status of the Naval Militia men in the Naval Reserves. Federal acts passed in 1920, 1922 and finally in 1925 dealt with the specifics of Naval Militia and Naval Reserve service.<sup>44</sup> Part of the reason the Naval Militia lingered, was the fact the newly formed Naval Reserve never achieved the popular support it thought it had. Most Naval Reservists did not maintain their affiliation with that organization after the war. In fact, less than 2,000 out of a possible 30,000 joined the Naval Reserves at the end of the First World War.<sup>45</sup> Officers of the old Naval Militia Association were quick to become involved in the new Naval Reserve Association and in some cases held dual memberships.

Much of the demise of the Naval Militia can be squarely placed in this period and as a direct result of the legislation passed in 1918

and 1925. While this conclusion cannot be denied, the fact also remains other forces were at work in making the Naval Militia less important.

While it was true, that the benefits of affiliating with the Naval Reserve made affiliation with the Naval Militia less attractive, so did other organizations that competed for manpower during this time. The Marine Corps Reserve was a strong competitor for personnel. The newly formed Coast Guard and its reserve organization were also making association with the Naval Militia less attractive. The Coast Guard during this period was having problems attracting the same type of individual that normally would have joined the Naval Militia.<sup>46</sup> The United States Power Boat Squadron was competing with the Coast Guard Auxillary for membership and control over the functions of sport boating. Many of the leading members of the New York Naval Militia left the organization and joined other boating organizations.<sup>47</sup> With a federal Naval Reserve offering better benefits for those wishing to pursue the strictly military and blue water aspects of the sea and with organizations such as the Power Boat Squadron and Coast Guard Auxillary competing for those looking at the more recreational aspects of boating, the Naval Militia did not have very much to offer any of its primary audiences.

Another drain of manpower away from the Naval Militia was the new Merchant Marine Reserve. The Merchant Marine Reserve was instituted in 1925 and subsidized in 1927 to the sum of \$25,000.<sup>48</sup> Clearly, this would be inadequate to provide the merchant seaman the Navy and the nation would need in the coming years. Many, in the Navy Department, it appears, forgot the Naval Militia had handled this assignment in the

First World War. During World War I, the National Naval Volunteers manned fifteen German Liners and operated ocean going merchantmen for the Navy. The primary source of recruits for the Merchant Marine Reserve program were ex-National Naval Volunteers still employed in the maritime industry (though their numbers were shrinking). Once again, efforts at the national level meant less personnel available for recruitment into those naval militias that still existed.

### World War II

As previously discussed, Naval Militia units began a steady decline after the First World War. But in the late 1930s, some states began to look towards revitalizing their decaying state Naval Militia organizations. In 1937, the Adjutant General of the Pennsylvania National Guard sent letters to several states requesting information on the status of their naval militias and asking for suggestions on how Pennsylvania might organize a Naval Militia.<sup>49</sup> Missouri, for the first time in over thirty years, increased subsidies to its Naval Militia in 1940 and founded a new armory in St. Louis.<sup>50</sup> It appears that some states were interested in forming naval militias not out of concern for their safety, but, as a means of providing an outlet for citizens of their state and to help the Naval Reserve prepare for the approaching conflict abroad.

During the Second World War, the role of the Naval Militia was minimal. Most of its members were recalled to regular service because they had been required since 1918 to hold dual status in the Naval Reserve. New York during this period did use some of its Naval Militia

personnel, not serving with regular forces, to run power stations and patrol along the waterfront in New York City.<sup>51</sup>

The Naval Militia did have indirect influence on the role that Naval Reservist would play in war. Naval Reservists contributed significantly to the manpower and expertise of the United States Navy during the War. For example, 91 percent of all commanding officers of destroyers and transports were Naval Reservists, 90 percent of all PT Boat Squadrons were commanded by Naval Reservists, and 90 percent of all officers assigned to escort carriers were Naval Reservists.<sup>52</sup> By the end of the war, while excluded from more traditional large combatant commands and command of operational staffs, Naval Reservists did command 302 Destroyer Escorts, 41 Destroyers, eight minesweepers, and 33 submarines.<sup>53</sup> While data does not readily exist to show how many of these individuals held dual commissions in the Naval Reserve and the Naval Militia, many must have. More importantly, many of these men were trained prior to hostilities in armories provided by the Naval Militia. The Naval Militia's legacy can not be measured by sheer numbers but is better measured by the organization it put into place to train and support sailors prior to the war. The use of drilling reserve officers, often times trained in the Naval Militia or in Naval Militia facilities to man training establishment and manage reserve programs freed regular Navy officers for combat duty.

By the end of World War II the pattern of relationships between the Naval Militia and the Naval Reserves had been set. With the ascendancy of the Naval Reserve, the Naval Militia began its steady decline. Many of the problems could be traced to internal debate within the military



establishment of the United States. Across the board, the professional officer corps in both the army and the Navy had little use for their counterparts at state levels. An organized federal reserve they had control of, at least financially, was much to their liking. As a result many states had only a few years earlier actively pursued reestablishing naval militias lost interest or began to disband their units. To the Navy Department and later the Department of Defense, the prospect of using or the need for the Naval Militia was nil. World War II was pivotal for the Naval Militia because it changed forever the nature of the United States military and the United States Navy. With world wide commitments in the atomic age the ability to usefully employ citizen-sailors in naval militias became in the eyes of the military establishment impractical. What then does this mean for the Naval Militia today?

## CHAPTER 6

### MODERN NAVAL MILITIAS AND THEIR FUTURE

#### Post World War II Naval Militia

The end of World War II, saw the United States emerge as a superpower. It rightfully took its place as a leader on the world stage. As a result of its new found preeminence the United States military was forced to change. As the military adapted, evolved and changed so did the way it viewed its reserve components. The United States Navy was particularly forced to change the way it viewed and would come to use its reserve component forces. Included among these forces was the Naval Militia.

The Naval Militia by this time had been eclipsed by its early rival the Naval Reserve. Nonetheless, there were still at least four states that would support a Naval Militia until today (New York, Ohio, California, and Massachusetts). More importantly, the Naval Militia organization was instrumental in helping establish and expand a truly modern Naval Reserve after the war. Three areas benefitted greatly from the experiences of the Naval Militia.

First, was the matter of trained manpower. Naval militias provide a large number of the officers and enlisted men and women for the Naval Reserve. Between the years 1947 and 1950 the Navy Reserve was to grow from 16,200 officers and 117,200 enlisted to 25,000 officers and 156,000 enlisted.<sup>1</sup> Equally important was the fact that the Navy needed

to induce many of its reserve officers to continue their assignment with the regular Navy after the war. Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal, himself a former Naval Militiaman from WWI, was instrumental in this endeavor. Forrestal appointed a board of twenty officers, fifteen of them Naval Reservists and Naval Militia, "to make a comprehensive study of the employment, assignment, and relationship of Reserve and temporary officers with officers of the regular Navy."<sup>2</sup> The Naval Militia during this period then had the task of providing a trained manpower pool to supplement the regular Navy during peacetime, in effect a trained recruiting pool.

Second, and probably the most lasting legacy of naval militias were the facilities that they made available to the Naval Reserve. The Navy had never funded armories before this period. Those units that were dually affiliated with naval militia units had use of state built and supported armories. A 1946 article from Proceedings points out that state-affiliated Naval Reserve units had a great advantage in readiness over units not state-affiliated.<sup>3</sup> Some 287 facilities were converted from state use to Naval Reserve use.<sup>4</sup> One drawback to these armories was the fact they were designed for training from a different era. The large drill decks, used for training men in closed ordered drill were of little use for training a modern electronic navy that needed spaces for electronics training, combat information center (CIC) training, and radar training. Modifications were necessary and many drill halls were converted. For example, the drill hall of the Naval Reserve Center in Youngstown, Ohio, had a twin 40mm Anti-Aircraft gun mount installed

along with its radar director during this period. Today, many naval reservists drill in armories that once belonged to state naval militias.

Finally, the Naval Militia provided an important example in the debate on the future of the National Guard and the reserve forces of the country. Following World War II, there was a movement within the military to do away with the National Guard. The example of the Naval Militia and how its members held dual status in the Naval Reserve was a model that some in the military thought the National Guard should pattern itself after. In November 1947, then Secretary of Defense Forrestal appointed a committee to examine reserve manning problems in all the services. The Assistant Secretary of the Army, Gordon Gray, chaired the board.<sup>5</sup> The Gray Board reported its findings in June 1948 in a report titled: Reserve Forces for National Security. The board made a most controversial recommendation when it argued that the National Guard should be absorbed into the Army Reserve--in much the same manner as the Naval Militia was absorbed into the Naval Reserve.<sup>6</sup> Across the board, the Gray Board's recommendations argued for unification of reserve forces and integration with active duty forces. The Board also, to the advantage of the Naval Reserve, argued for more funding for reserve forces. Compared to the Army National Guard and the Air National Guard the Naval Militia did not put as strenuous fight as might be expected. The Naval Militia at this point existed in only five states and had since the First World War been content with its position of joint state and federal control. However, to the National Guard this was an anathema. National Guard officers and state politicians fought vigorously for the independence of their organizations. The old

arguments from the federalist periods were dusted off and used again. Opponents of this amalgamation of state and federal forces, argued that such a unified reserve force would place too much power in the hands of the federal government.<sup>7</sup> Unlike the Naval Militia of some thirty years earlier, the National Guard and Air Guard was successful in maintaining their independence from full federal control. Had the Naval Militia re-entered the fray at this point, its history may have been different as well.

#### Future of Naval Militia

Having already been set, the pattern for naval militia appears not readily changeable in the foreseeable future. However, that is not to say it cannot or will not play role in this country's defense. Since only four states support naval militias today, an examination of current activities as a basis for future development is warranted. Examination of the New York State Naval Militia can provide insight into the Naval Militia organization today.

The New York Naval Militia was organized as a Provisional Naval Battalion in 1889 and formally mustered into state service as the First Battalion, Naval Reserve Artillery in June 1891. Since its founding, it has had members called to federal service in every conflict that the United States has been involved. The New York State Naval Militia shares a parallel structure with the Naval Reserve and New York Military Law requires that all New York Naval Militia members to be drilling Navy and Marine Corps Reservists. The New York Naval Militia is the naval component of the state's military forces. As the oldest active continuous Naval Militia in the country and as a dual federal/state

force it has two missions. The first mission, a federal one, is to respond to the needs of the federal government either as units or individuals. Its second mission, a state one, is to respond to the call of the Governor in the event of natural disaster, civil defense emergency or domestic disorder.<sup>8</sup>

Operating under a budget of \$200,000 the New York State Naval Militia provides a trained manpower pool for use in state emergencies.<sup>9</sup> The budget is small since all costs directly related to training, such as pay and allowances for Militia personnel, active duty full-time support personnel, logistics support for training, uniforms, and equipment are funded by the Department of the Navy.<sup>10</sup> The skills that these men and women provide are varied. New York Naval Militia military tasks include:

Stationary Engineering. Operating and restoring vital utilities, such as power plants, water plants, or sewage disposal plants. Naval reservists trained in such occupation skills as Boiler Technicians, Electric Technicians, Machinest Mates, Enginemen, and Hull Technicians can perform all of the above functions.

Maritime Activities. The operation and maintenance of types of watercrafts including tugs, barges, and buoy tenders. New York with its ports in New York City and along the Great Lakes and with its canals can use the skills of such personnel as Boatswain Mates and Quartermasters.

Security. Marine Corps Reserve personnel are specifically trained for these types of activities although navy Master-at-Arms can also perform these functions equally as well.

Construction Activities. the Navy Seabees from Construction Battalions are experts in a variety of construction and demolition operations.

When called into state service the costs associated with such call-up are borne by the state. What the Naval Militia provides a state then, is a skilled and trained manpower pool with its costs borne by the federal government. When needed for a state emergency it is there for the governor's use. The Naval Militia of today should be viewed as an insurance policy whose premiums are paid by the federal government and the only deductible is if the state uses the militia for emergency situations.

Disaster relief is perhaps the most common situation in which state naval militias may be used. However, other situations are equally suitable for their employment. A modest list of suggested uses of the Naval Militia could include port security and the tracking of ships and cargoes. Port security could not only include docks and wharfs, but airports and other mass transit facilities. Law enforcement activities related to the war on drugs would also benefit from the expertise of naval militia members. In this capacity, they are under state control: and not limited by the *Posse Comitatus* Act in their capacity to perform civilian law enforcement activities. Operating state facilities during strikes or other periods can also be accomplished by the Naval Militia. Clearly, most any function that guardsmen perform can also be performed by a members of a state naval militia with the requisite military training.

### Conclusions

This study has attempted to provide a broad overview of an unique military organization. It has traced the sine wave existence of the Naval Militia from the Revolutionary War until today. It has offered a number of explanations on why the Naval Militia has evolved in the manner it has and what its evolution has meant to the United States military, Navy, and Naval Reserve. More study is needed on this subject. Comparison with the naval militia movements in other countries could prove useful. A more thorough look at the similarities and contrasts between the Naval Militia and the National Guard would also benefit from further study. In the end, the Naval Militia has been a useful tool for the United States Navy, and while it still exists in a limited number of states today it does provide an insurance policy for states that still maintain it. Will it survive into the next century is a question that cannot be answered. Surely as states budgets become stretched more and more, those four states that support naval militias may be under financial pressure to cease their support. The Naval Militia has proved useful in the past and may once again prove useful in the future.



## ENDNOTES

### Chapter 2

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<sup>2</sup>Lawrence D. Cress, Citizens in Arms, (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1982), xi-xiv.

<sup>3</sup>Wieand, 3.

<sup>4</sup>J. A. McManemin, Captains of the State Navies, (Ho-Ho-Kus, NJ: Ho-Ho-Kus Publishing Co., 1984), 69.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 71.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 1.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 2.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 294.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., iii.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 200.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 49-51.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 367.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 327.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 38.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., 71.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 201.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., 52.

<sup>18</sup>Cress, 79.

<sup>19</sup>Gene A. Smith, "For the Purpose of Defence: Thomas Jefferson's Naval Militia," American Neptune 53 (Winter, 1993): 32.

### Chapter 3

<sup>1</sup>Lawrence D. Cress, Citizens in Arms (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1982), 82.

<sup>2</sup>John K. Mahon, History of Militia and National Guard (New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1983), 64.

<sup>3</sup>Harold T. Wieand, "The History of the Development of the United States Naval Reserve, 1889-1941," (Ph.D. diss., University of Pittsburgh, 1953), 4.

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<sup>5</sup>Gene A. Smith, "For the Purpose of Defence: Thomas Jefferson's Naval Militia," American Neptune 53 (Winter, 1993): 30.

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<sup>7</sup>Charles Oscar Paulin, Paulin's History of Naval Administration 1775-1911 (Annapolis: U.S. Naval Institute Press, 1968), 120.

<sup>8</sup>CDR James A. Watters et al., U.S. Naval Reserve: The First 75 Years (Newport, RI: United States Naval Reserve Project, United States Naval War College, 1992), 8.

<sup>9</sup>Smith, 31.

<sup>10</sup>Watters, 6.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 8.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 9.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 12.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 8.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., 11.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., 13.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., 21.

#### Chapter 4

<sup>1</sup>Harold T. Wieand, "The History of the Development of the United States Naval Reserve, 1889-1941," (Ph.D. diss., Univeristy of Pittsburgh, 1953), 7-20.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 8.

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<sup>4</sup>CDR James A Watters et al., U.S. Naval Reserve: The First 75 Years (Newport, RI: United States Naval Reserve Project, United States Naval War College, 1992), 38.

<sup>5</sup>Wieand, 23.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 38.

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 38-39.

<sup>9</sup>Wieand, 16-17.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 12

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 39.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 39.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 41.

<sup>14</sup>George T. Davis, A Navy Second to None: The Development of Modern American Naval Policy, (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1946), 473.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., 41.

<sup>16</sup>Davis, 93.

<sup>17</sup>Wieand, 44.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., 45.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., 50.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., 48.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 51.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., 50.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., 51.

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<sup>1</sup>"Naval Militia Association," New York Times, 16 June 1895.

<sup>2</sup>Kevin R. Hart, "Towards A Citizen Sailor: The History of the Naval Militia Movement, 1888-1898," The American Neptune, 33 (No. 4, 1973): 269.

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<sup>4</sup>"Naval Militia Ball," New York Times, 28 January 1913.

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 275.

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<sup>9</sup>Senate Report no, 167, 63rd Cong., 2nd Sess., 4.

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<sup>11</sup>Charles Oscar Paulin, Paulin's History of Naval Administration 1775-1911 (Annapolis: U.S. Naval Institute Press, 1968), 147.

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18State of Massachusetts Department of Naval Militia letter 12 June 1916, Transcript from the private collection of Col. W.D. McGlasson, Vero Beach, FL.

19Watters et al., 79.

20Ibid.

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24Wieand, 116.

25Congress, House, Subcommittee of the Committee on Armed Services, Hearings on H.R. 5426, 82nd Cong., 2nd Sess., 317-341.

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27George T. Davis, A Navy Second to None: The Development of Modern American Naval Policy, (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1940), 38.

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32New York State, Adjutant General Annual Report, (Albany: J.B. Lyons, 1913).

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34Renee Hylton and Robert K. Wright, Jr, A Brief History of the Militia and National Guard, (Washington DC: Department of the Army and Air Force Historical Services Division, 1993), 20-27.

<sup>35</sup>Wieand, 138.

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<sup>37</sup>Watters et al., 82.

<sup>38</sup>Joseph Ralston Hayden, A History of the Univeristy Divisions, Michigan Naval Militia, (Ann Arbor: Association of Former Members, 1921), 30-33.

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<sup>40</sup>F. H. Potter, "Naval Reserve, A Story of Enthusiasm," Outlook, 118 (March 1918), 39-53.

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid., 82-83.

<sup>43</sup>Wieand, 143-144.

<sup>44</sup>public Law 68-611, Statutes at Large, 68 sec 1269, (1925).

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<sup>49</sup>Joseph Frearson, Department of Military Affairs State of Pennsylvania, letter sent to states requesting information on Naval Militias, 3 May 1937, Transcript from the private collection of Col. W. D. McGlasson, Vero Beach, FL.

<sup>50</sup>John L Graves, 1st Lt, JAG for state of Missouri discussing contract for new Naval Militia Armory in St. Louis, 30 December 1942, Transcript from the private collection of Col. W. D. McGlasson, Vero Beach, FL.

<sup>51</sup>New York State Naval Militia Association, New York Naval Militia, 1994.

<sup>52</sup>Watters et al., 169.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., 170.

## Chapter 6

<sup>1</sup>Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy, 1946, (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946) 26.

<sup>2</sup>CDR James A Watters et al., U.S. Naval Reserve: The First 75 Years (Newport, RI: United States Naval Reserve Project, United States Naval War College, 1992), 204.

<sup>3</sup>C. C. Payne, "Future of the Naval Reserve," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, 153 (June 1946), 714.

<sup>4</sup>Watters et al., 207.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 215.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 217.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 215-220.

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

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